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OSD/APSA FOR SEDNEY/HELVEY/BASALLA/GEIS;
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JOINT STAFF FOR J3/35
USFJ FOR J00/J01/J02/J2/J3/J5
CIA PASS ODNI

E.O. 12958: DECL: AFTER KOREAN REUNIFICATION
TAGS: PREL PARM MARR KN KS JA

SUBJECT: COORDINATING ON PUBLIC MESSAGING PRIOR TO DPRK TD2
LAUNCH

REF: A. STATE 29932
1B. TOKYO 00445
1C. TOKYO 00446
1D. TOKYO 00579
1E. TOKYO 00633
1F. DCINTRON MARCH 26 E-MAIL TO STATE/EAP/J KELLEY
AND OSD/APSA/J BASALLA
1G. TOKYO 00687

Classified By: Ronald Post, Charge d'Affaires, a.i.; reasons 1.4 (b/d)

11. (U) This is an action request cable. Please see paragraph
17.

12. (S/NF) SUMMARY: Japan is seeking clarification and explanation of written State Department comments about Japan's non-papers on plans for initial actions and public messaging following a DPRK TD-2 launch, MOFA and Cabinet Secretariat representatives told the Embassy and U.S. Forces, Japan on March 31. Japan would like to receive the clarifications by the April 2 Director-General-level bilateral coordination meeting. The Embassy used the March 31 meeting, a director-level bilateral interagency meeting to prepare for the April 2 meeting, to deliver Ref A's DPRK TD-2 launch public diplomacy coordination points and press inquiry response language. A Japanese Joint Staff representative referred to Secretary of Defense Gates' March 29 comments Fox News that the United States has no plans to intercept the launch unless something is heading for Hawaii. He insinuated that during their upcoming phone call, Defense Minister Hamada might ask Secretary Gates if his statement signifies a shift in U.S. policy to cooperate with Japan.
End Summary.

13. (S) On March 31, Embassy and USFJ representatives met with Government of Japan interagency division directors to prepare for the next Director-General-level TD-2 bilateral

coordination meeting on April 2. Japanese participants in the March 31 meeting included representatives from the Cabinet Secretariat (Foreign Affairs and National Security/Crisis Management), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (National Security, Policy Coordination, Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, Northeast Asia), Ministry of Defense (Defense Policy Bureau) and Joint Staff Office (J3 (Operations) and J5 Plans and Policy)).

¶4. (S) Embassy used the meeting to deliver the DPRK TD-2 launch public diplomacy coordination points and press inquiry response language contained in Ref A. We clearly stated that the Embassy would only use the language to respond to press inquiries and would not issue press statements.

¶5. (S/NF) MOFA representatives requested clarification and further explanation of the written comments provided by the State Department to the Japanese Embassy regarding Japan's non-papers on its plans for initial post-launch actions and messaging. (Non-papers transmitted Ref F.) Specific MOFA explanations, questions, and requests for clarification are as follows:

-- Regarding the State Department,s comment that a protest against the DPRK (via DPRK Embassy in Beijing) would be "perhaps counterproductive?," MOFA seeks further explanation, noting that it took the same action following the July 2006 missile launches and did not find it counterproductive then.

-- Regarding Japan's plans to categorize DPRK actions as "Inconsistent with the Joint Statement of the Six-Party Talks," MOFA seeks clarification on the meaning of the Department,s comment that the "problem is that the DPRK may respond in kind.⁸ MOFA also asked if the U.S. is specifically asking Japan to delete the language and if so, why. Cabinet Secretariat (CS) Foreign Policy Counselor Asari said Japan is not looking to close the door on the Six-Party Talks. Japan used the same language following the July 2006 launch. Japan is not calling the upcoming a launch a "violation" of the statement, but rather plans to say that it is inconsistent with the spirit of the Joint Statement, Asari stated.

-- As to the Department,s comment that a &self-fulfilling prophecy⁸ would possibly be created if the Japanese say the launch will have "a negative effect on efforts, including those taken by the Six-Party Talks, to ease tension on the Korean Peninsula," Counselor Asari offered alternative language. He said Japan means to say that the launch would be "contrary to efforts" to ease tensions and make progress in the Six-Party Talks. He asked if this wording, which would remove reference to negative effects on the Six-Party Talks, would be more acceptable to the United States.

-- Counselor Asari noted that the United States indicated in its written comments that it would not include in its public comments that Japan will continue to examine unilateral measures against North Korea. For domestic and other reasons, Japan has to state publicly that it will not foreclose any unilateral measures; not saying so would be conspicuous. Japan will take domestic and international factors into account before reaching any decision on unilateral measures.

¶6. (S/NF) JSO J5-representative COL Nakano asked if Secretary of Defense Gates' March 29 comments on Fox News, namely that the United States would not intercept a missile unless heading for the United States, signifies a shift in U.S. policy towards cooperating with the Japan Self Defense Forces in the Sea of Japan. Embassy and USFJ representatives responded that there has been no change in U.S. policy and ongoing cooperation, such as information sharing, would continue. It is important, however, to understand that both nations' deployed assets are primarily for the defense of the respective homelands. COL Nakano noted that Secretary Gates and Defense Minister Hamada will talk by phone in the near future and he hoped the Defense Minister would not feel compelled to ask the same question.

¶7. (S/NF) ACTION REQUEST: Please provide a response to the Government of Japan's request for clarification (para 5) to the U.S. comments on Japan's non-paper sent in ref tel F. Please provide the response no later than opening of business April 2 to allow the CDA to deliver the response during the DG-level bilateral coordination meeting scheduled for the same day.

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End Cable Text